

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated July 10, 2002, applicant hereby provisionally elects Group II as identified by the Examiner, including claims 6-9.

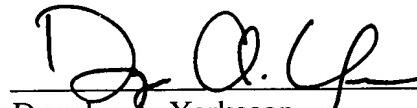
By this amendment, claims 1-5 and 10 –19 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter found therein. Applicants hereby reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications for the claims in Groups I and III as identified by the Examiner.

The specification has been amended to correct certain minor clerical or typographical errors. As such, such changes do not effect the disclosure of the invention.

Claims 6-9 and 20-34 are presented. New claims 20-34 have been added, wherein claims 20 and 21 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 6. New independent claims 22, 28, and 32 are directed to a caster assembly including a locking member configured to selectively prevent movement of a support shaft. New claims 23-27 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 22. Likewise, new claims 29-31 depend from independent claim 28, and new claims 33 and 34 depend from independent claim 32. Claims 22, 28, and 32, and the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to recite subject matter similar to that of claim 6 such that all of the claims are deemed to be appropriate for examination. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that all of the solicited claims are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if any questions or comment should arise during the course of consideration of this matter.

Respectfully submitted



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APPENDIX A

MARKED-UP VERSION SHOWING CHANGES

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Kindly replace the paragraph beginning on page 14, at line 9, as follows:

Caster assembly 150 provides casters 152 that can swing down to support bed frame 10 on intermediate frame [16] 14 or swing up to allow base frame [16] 12 to support bed frame 10 as discussed hereafter. Diagonal support bar 164 of caster 152 is rotatably coupled to side beam 30 of intermediate frame 14 by a pin 168 which extends through an aperture 165 formed in bar 164 and through an aperture 167 formed in side beam 30. A locking clip 169 extends through an aperture in pin 168 to hold the pin 168 in place. Locking bar 154 has a U-shaped end portion 170 that is rotatably coupled to side beam 30. Illustratively, end 171 of locking bar 154 extends through an aperture 173 formed in side beam 30 to pivotally couple the locking bar 154 to the side beam 30. Pedal 156 is illustratively a U-shaped metal bar and is rigidly coupled to end portion 170, e.g., by a weld, to provide a simple, reliable, and inexpensive mechanism to allow an operator to rotate locking bar 154, e.g., by applying force with a foot.

Kindly replace the paragraph beginning on page 14, at line 21, as follows:

Figure 17 is a side view of the caster assembly of Fig. 16, showing the caster locking bar in an engaged position. Caster assembly 150 is in the locked position when caster support shaft 162 is vertical so that top flange 166 rests on a top surface of side beam 30 and locking bar 154 is rotated to be adjacent support shaft 162 as shown in Fig. 17. In this configuration, locking bar 154 engages a side surface 175 of [support shaft 162] support bar 164 to prevent caster 152 from rotating in a counter-clockwise direction, and top flange 166 engages the top surface of side beam 30 to prevent caster 152 from rotating in a clockwise direction. When intermediate frame 14 is in a lowered position, base frame legs 24 are kept above the ground 28 as shown in Fig. 17. If intermediate frame 14 is raised vertically relative to base frame 12, then base frame legs 24 can support bed frame 10 on ground 28 even when caster assembly 150 is in the locked position.

Kindly replace the paragraph beginning on page 15, at line 3, as follows:

Figure 18 is a side view similar to Fig. 17, showing the caster locking bar moved to a disengaged position. Figure 19 is a side view similar to Fig. 18, showing the caster locking bar 154 in a disengaged position with the legs 24 of the base frame 12 supported directly on the ground 28. Caster assembly 150 is unlocked by rotating caster locking bar 154 via rotation of pedal 156 in direction 172 from the position as shown in Fig. 17 to the position as shown in Fig. 18. With caster locking bar 154 not restraining caster support shaft 162 by engaging support bar 164, caster 152 is free to rotate in a counter-clockwise direction as the intermediate frame 14 is lowered until leg 24 of base frame 12 engages ground 28 as shown in Fig. 19. This prevents the bed frame 10 from rolling. Caster assembly 150 can be reconfigured to engage ground 28 and support bed frame 10 by raising intermediate frame 14 until caster 152 can be moved to a vertical orientation, at which point pedal 156 is rotated to cause locking bar 154 to engage the support bar 164 and the support shaft 162 as shown in Fig. 17. Caster assembly 150 thus provides a mechanism whereby bed frame 10 can be selectively supported on casters 158 when intermediate frame 14 is in its lowermost position relative to base frame 12.